

The Prairie Light Review

Volume 29

Number 2 *Further Reflections*

Article 58

4-1-2009

The 2009 Prairie Poetry Award

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College of DuPage

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Recommended Citation

Whiteacre, Liz (2009) "The 2009 Prairie Poetry Award," *The Prairie Light Review*: Vol. 29: No. 2, Article 58.

Available at: <http://dc.cod.edu/plr/vol29/iss2/58>

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The 2009 Prairie Poetry Award

Liz Whiteacre

This award honors the poetic talents of students and community members in District 502. Participants were invited to submit up to three previously unpublished poems, and a team of C.O.D. English faculty, Professors Linda Elaine, Tia Greenfield, and Chris Picard, selected ten finalists.

This year, the contest's guest judge was Curtis L. Crisler, and he selected the contests' four winners. Crisler is an Assistant Professor of Creative Writing at Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW), and his forthcoming book, tentatively called *Pulling Scabs*, will be released soon by Aquarius Press. He won the 2008 Keyhole Chapbook Award for *Spill*. His book *Tough Boy Sonatas* was published in 2007. He is a Cave Canem Fellow and has been published in many journals and magazines.

Our 2009 winners are Tricia Marcella Cimera, Wilda Morris, Kendra Juskus, and Michelle Parks. Their poems, which were part of their contest entries, follow. The winners also participated in a private workshop with Mr. Crisler and will be honored at *The Prairie Light Review* Spring 2009 Publication Party.

Tricia Cimera loves to read, travel, day-dream and study human nature. The medium of poetry suits her because it can be small (a few lines) but compress so much intensity in tricky ways. She lives with her sweetheart, Rob, three cats and a 25 year old African Gray parrot in an old, quirky house and works as an Office Manager.

Kendra Langdon Juskus recently moved to DuPage County from Washington, DC. She is the managing editor of *Flourish Quarterly*, the journal of *Flourish*, a faith-based environmental stewardship network. She writes from Wheaton, where she lives with her husband, Ryan.

Wilda Morris is Workshop Chair of Poets and Patrons of Chicago and Past President of the Illinois State Poetry Society. She has published poetry in a number of journals and other periodicals in the United States and Great Britain and in several anthologies. Her book, *Szechwan Shrimp and Fortune Cookies: Poems from a Chinese Restaurant*, was published by Rockford Writers' Guild Press in 2008.

Michelle Parks graduated from the National University of Singapore and taught ESL before working at a telecommunications company. She lives in Lisle with her husband and two children. She enjoys poetry, art and Buddhist philosophy and is currently taking Painting 1 at C.O.D.

For more information about future Prairie Awards in poetry, fiction and creative nonfiction, please email litaward@cod.edu.